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COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

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October 18, 2000

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Magalie Roman Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
455 12th St. SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: ULTRA-WIDEBAND (ET DOCKET 98-153)

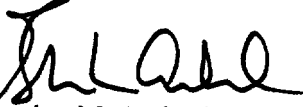
Dear Ms. Salas,

In response to the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on ultra-wideband radio, the Council of Chief State School Officers wishes to express its support for decisions by the Commission that aim to increase the availability of high-speed wireless networking services. Since passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, CCSSO has endorsed virtually all efforts to advance universal access to broadband technologies, particularly, to rural and high-cost areas. The Commission must continue to increase "local choice" by promoting the deployment of wired and wireless networks that increase low-cost opportunities to access the Internet and advanced services. We believe the availability of ultra-wideband ["UWB"] technologies will create new opportunities for the nation's schools and libraries to access and use a wider array of critical electronic information services.

UWB has the potential to provide low-cost, high-speed, unlicensed wireless devices for local area networking which will help many communities to network and disseminate public information services. Access to these technologies should also offer benefits to many of the nation's schools and classrooms. The option to access UWB wireless networking could enhance the capacity of many local schools and libraries that are searching for more practical solutions to network local areas services. It could also have the effect of increasing the number of funded applications for internal connections under the E-rate program. Many of applicants in some of our lowest income urban areas, have begun to consider "wireless solutions."

Recent studies and government surveys indicate that many of the nation's schools are too old to install wired connections. It is often too expensive and impractical to install advanced wire lines. Advanced wireless services represent an economical solution. The FCC should act immediately to ensure the availability of UWB devices which do not cause interference for other wireless services. For the reasons cited above, we urge the Commission to move forward in licensing ultra-wideband technologies.

Sincerely:


Gordon M. Ambach
Executive Director

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